


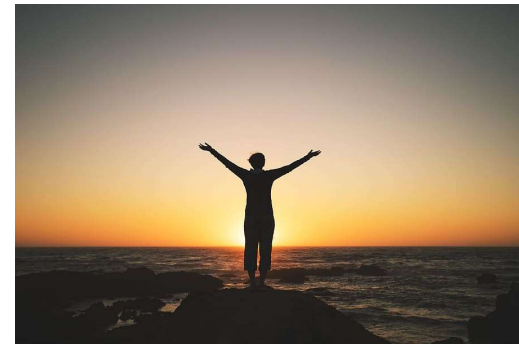
Cornerstone Church
Sunday Worship Service Presentation – January 28, 2024



Seeking Harmony in Jesus' Heart

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Overview of Today's Message

- Today's message will include the following:
 - 1. Pursuing *Harmony* as part of our spiritual journey**
 - 2. Most of Us Want Harmony and Happiness – but seek it in the wrong places!**
 - 3. We Can Find Harmony and Happiness in Jesus' Heart**
 - 4. Further Reflections and a Prayer**



- We have been on a journey together:
 - Over the last 4+ years, refocused on some of the basics about being a body of believers in God and followers of His Son, Jesus Christ.
 - Focused on prayer and study of God’s Word
 - Focused on being a community in the church
 - Focused on serving the broader communities we live in
 - Confirming our Core Beliefs and shared Church Mission

“Following Jesus. Being Good News. Making Disciples.”

This simple mission statement is a way of expressing our conviction that Christianity is ultimately a lifestyle and not just a set of beliefs or doctrines.

- Jesus confirmed and modeled the Greatest Commandments.
- Jesus - the creator of the universe chose to live among us – teaching us how to love in this way.
- He surrendered his own will to obey the Father – even through his trial, torture, and death on a cross by political and religious leaders for our sins.
- God raised him from the dead and HE IS our Lord and Savior.
- Jesus also promised that God’s Holy Spirit will help us, too.

The Greatest Commandment (Luke 10:27 NIV)

... Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all of your mind; and Love your neighbor as yourself.

1. Pursuing Harmony As Part of Our Spiritual Journey

- The apostles and Jesus' earliest followers experienced many challenges in understanding how to build community and confirm their shared beliefs and experiences as new "Christians".
- Paul (a Jewish scholar and persecutor of these Christians) was confronted and converted by Jesus – and ultimately became the most prolific evangelist for Christ.
- Paul saw the wisdom and need to call for the Unity of the Spirit among all Christians.

“Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.”

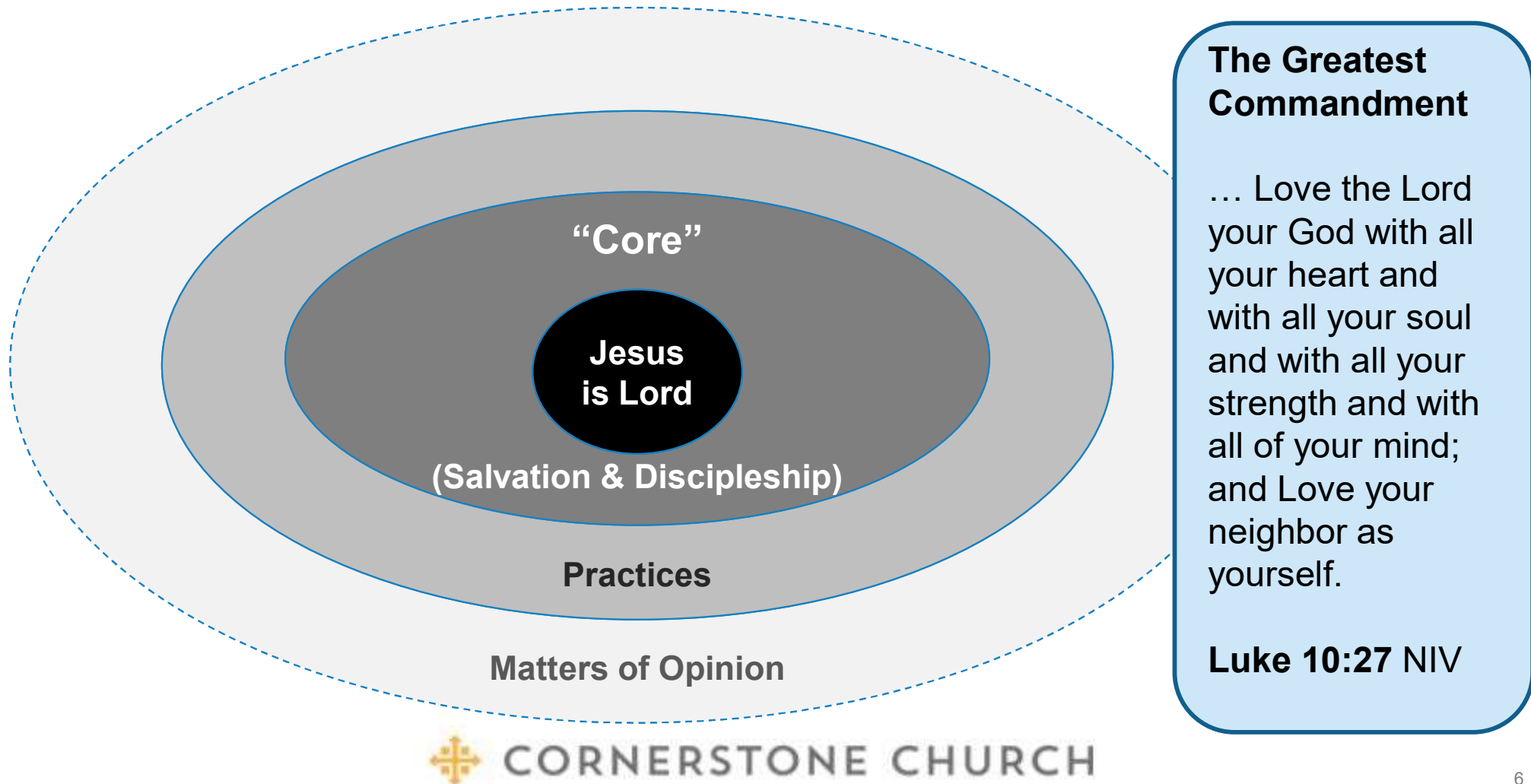
Ephesians 4:3-6 NIV

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1. Pursuing Harmony As Part of Our Spiritual Journey

- We want to be a healthy church, with focus on Salvation and Discipleship issues, supportive practices, and respect for varying opinions in how we seek to fulfill the Greatest Commandment.



1. Pursuing Harmony As Part of Our Spiritual Journey

▪ **Let us continue to seek balance and Harmony as we:**



- Harmonize all that God has given us to Love God (Father, Son, and Spirit) with our all (heart, soul, strength, and mind).
- Imitate Jesus example of sacrificial love as we build community and boldly love our “neighbors” as ourself.
- Utilize our various gifts and passions as “owners” and not just renters at Cornerstone.
- Respect the diversity of people and their perspectives – that do not violate our Core Beliefs.

2. Most of Us Want Harmony and Happiness - but seek it in the wrong places!

- From our very beginnings, despite even good intentions, as people we have struggled to embrace God's way.
- **Genesis 1 & 2:** God created us in his own image and wanted us to live in harmony with him and to provide oversight for the world.
- Yet, through our rebellion and desire to be independent of God as outlined in **Genesis 3**, we have continually made choices to be self-reliant which end up alienating us from God and hurting others.

2. Most of Us Want Harmony and Happiness - but seek it in the wrong places!

- This pattern of sin (missing the mark) has played out since the fall in **Genesis 3**, to this very day – even though God has not given up on us and continues to call us back to him and his way.
- God wants Harmony, but we often want independence.
- As Jesus prepared to confront the Jewish and Roman authorities, understanding he would soon be crucified, he lamented his peoples' rejection:

“Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing”

Mathew 23: 37 NIV

2. Most of Us Want Harmony and Happiness - but seek it in the wrong places!

- Throughout history, rather than listening and trusting God, men and women have sought to find identity and fulfillment in a wide range of misplaced pursuits and unhealthy relationships.
- Even with the best of intentions, without a reliance on God and his love as modeled by Jesus, we typically end up in conflict and unfulfilling relationships.
- When we are unhappy, many tend to seek comfort through varying forms of self-medication, distractions, and desired affirmation, including but not limited to the following: food, drugs, alcohol, sex, money and possessions, career advancement, controlling relationships, withdrawal, being religious, etc.

And how' has this path been working out for us?!

- **Jesus saw our bad predicament** – and called us to find harmony and peace in our reliance upon Him and how He has revealed the heart of this Father in Heaven.

²⁷ “All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. ²⁸ “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy and my burden is light”

Mathew 11: 27-30 NIV

- **Jesus** challenged Philip (and all of us) to trust that he was revealing the heart and power of God when he said:

... “Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? ¹⁰ Don’t you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you I do not speak on my own authority. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. ¹¹ Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the works themselves.”

John 14: 9-11 NIV

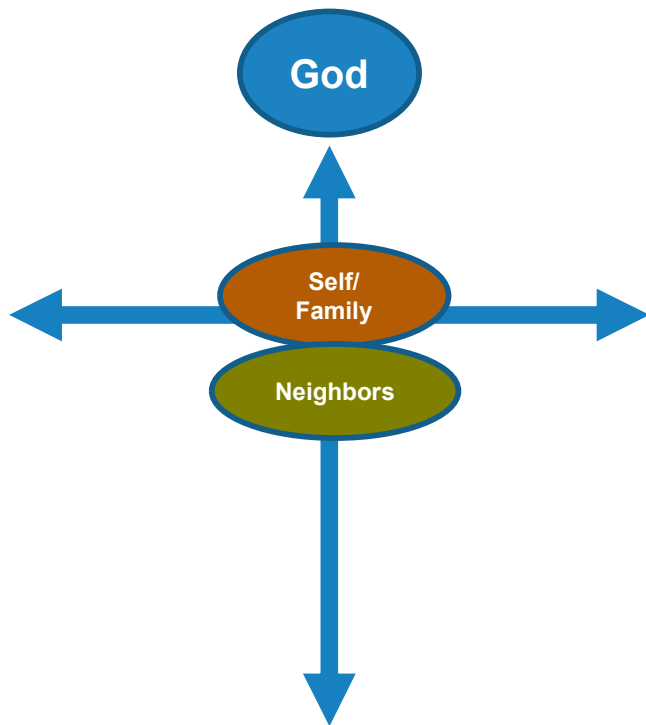
- More than anything else, Jesus called us to give our whole hearts to God and imitate Him – knowing we have “issues”.

²⁵ On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” ²⁶ “What is written in the Law?” he replied. “How do you read it?” ²⁷ He answered, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind”; and, “Love your neighbor as yourself.” ²⁸ “You have answered correctly,” Jesus replied. “Do this and you will live”.

Luke 10: 25-8 NIV



- Jesus taught us how to follow God and love others sacrificially and boldly for all to see.



²³ Then he said to them all: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. ²⁴ For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it. ²⁵ What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit their very self? **Luke 9:23-25** NIV

By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another. **John 13:35** NIV

- Jesus repeatedly clarified the heart of God, rejecting how religious leaders condemned “sinners,” including Mathew a tax collector who was hated by the local Pharisees.

On hearing this, Jesus said, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. ¹³ But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’ For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners”.

Mathew 9: 12 NIV

- Jesus modeled a life of humility and death on the cross to demonstrate the full extent of God's sacrificial love – reminding some of his discouraged disciples about these truths after he was raised from the dead.

²⁵ He said to them, "How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶ Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?" ²⁷ And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

Luke 24: 25-27 NIV

- Jesus charges us to trust that God entrusted him with all authority - and he commands us to help others to become his disciples.

¹⁶ Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. ¹⁷ When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. ¹⁸ Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age”.

Mathew 28: 16-20 NIV

And Jesus prays for all believers, calling us to pursue unity with each other, imitating the heart he has with the Father and Spirit.

²⁰ “My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, ²¹ that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.”

John 17: 20-21 NIV

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- You can't give what you don't have – so rely on God and seek his help and support to grow your own faith and trust in Him.
- Trust Jesus when he says:

⁷ “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. ⁸ For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.”

Mathew 7: 7-8 NIV

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- As the apostle Paul noted, it takes humility and grace with each other to live in harmony.

¹⁶ Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.

Romans 12: 16 NIV

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- Try not to give the “noise” and temptations from Satan a foothold in your heart.

¹Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, ²fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Hebrews 12: 1-2 NIV

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- Trust that God's way works and there is no better alternative.

Remember Jesus call for us to take his yoke in **Mathew 11: 27-30** and how much better we are off with God than what the world and our rejection of God has brought us before.

And please accept my prayer for us all:

... that the excitement and embracement we saw for deeper bible study, reflection, and engagement to grow closer to God and each other last year will only expand as we seek God's vision for Harmony in 2024 and beyond!

